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# Our LAND



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Harnessing the Weather -- Alfred Noy of Vernon Center is one of many Minnesota farmers who makes the weather work for him. He does this by maintaining soil tilth and organic matter with plenty of legumes and grass in the crop rotation. This year his yields of corn went 99 bushels per acre without any fertilizer except that applied to the legumes in the crop rotation. By putting a row of fertilizer on the corn, yields were increased to 114.5 bushels per acre.

Maintaining soil organic matter and tilth with legumes and grasses, green manure crops, barnyard manure and crop residues is the key to high crop yields and, more important, to making the crops yield well even in poor moisture years, says Harold Jones, extension soils specialist at the University of Minnesota. Like Mr. Hoy, however, farmers should provide plenty of fertilizer nutrients such as phosphate and potash which are needed to build organic matter through legumes.

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Ups Yield -- On a public tour in the Wilkins Soil Conservation District last fall one of the farms visited was the Sigward Swenson farm in Bighorn Township. Sigward showed the group a strip of rye that yielded 50 bushels to the acre. "Before I started farming the conservation way with strip cropping, field shelterbelts, rotations and fertilizer, 15 bushels to the acre was the best I ever got," he said.

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Get that Fertilizer -- Although fertilizer has been in good supply, it hasn't been moving to farms, and warehouse space has been getting short. This forces manufacturers to slow down and--coupled with transportation limitations at planting time--could mean a shortage during the spring rush. So C. O. Rost, chief of the soils division at the University of Minnesota, urges farmers to order fertilizer now and store it on the farm.

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